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**The Thesis Committee for Aissa Renee Widle
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**The Role of Multi-Sensory Marketing at Music Festivals and its
Implications on Social Media**

**APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

Supervisor:

Neal Burns

Angeline Close Scheinbaum

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by

Aissa Renee Widle, B.A.

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Abstract

The Role of Multi-Sensory Marketing at Music Festivals and its Implications in Social Media

Aissa Renee Widle, M.A

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Supervisor: Neal Burns

This research explores the effects of multi-sensory marketing-- specifically the consumer experience at music festivals (Coachella Music and Arts Festival and South by Southwest) on consumer behavior. Further, the research uncovers online consumer behaviors with various social media platforms as related to experiential events. The study examines that attendees exposed to a multi sensory experience react to a brands four business outcomes of increased: awareness, engagement, purchase intention and consumption explained in part by involvement of the five human senses. A theoretical background on the current use of multi-sensory marketing was accessed, while primary insight included in-depth interviews with industry professionals as well as a comprehensive online survey of attendees. Business implications are for managers to understand the financial return on marketing investments into branded, sensory interactions at music festivals. Managers are advised to examine how sensory marketing at festivals correlates to consumer recall or actual purchase, as a way to raise the market rate for event sponsors.

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INTRODUCTION

As the practice of experiential marketing becomes a common component within a brand's marketing mix, creating a more cluttered marketing environment, the expansion of brand activation concepts within the experiential marketing method, (e.g., multi-sensory marketing) are necessary to ensure an event's effectiveness. Ninety-six percent of all U.S corporations have, over the last ten years, included event marketing in their promotional strategies, and that trend is only going to continue in the years to come (Close *et al.*, 2006). Close *et al.* defines experiential marketing as a form of event marketing that focuses on the consumer experience and treats emotionally and rationally driven consumption as a holistic experience. These experiences involve sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and relational values that replace functional values (Close *et al.*, 2006).

Furthermore, an experiential event must strive to create a "flow-state experience" for consumers; according to Wood and Masterman (2007), flow-state experience can be achieved through the implementation of the 7 I's:

1. Involvement – Connection with the brand, event and experience
2. Interaction – Engagement with brand ambassadors, other attendees and exhibits
3. Immersion – Stimulation of all senses, isolated from other messages
4. Intensity – Memorable and high impact
5. Individuality – Uniqueness, one-on-one opportunities and customization
6. Innovation – Creativity in content, location and timing
7. Integrity – Authenticity providing real benefits and value

To achieve the overall flow of an event, immersion is an important sensory element. Since a message is considerably stronger if multiple senses are stimulated simultaneously, the targeted use of multi-sensory elements in strengthening marketing communication and distribution strategies becomes more evident (Wiedmann *et al...*, 2013). Wiedmann also states that, “with a combination of external stimuli, such as images (visual), sound (auditory), skin contact (haptic), smell (olfactory) and taste (gustatory) the multi-sensory approach aims to influence the consumer’s experience as a total experience.”

Moving further into the concept of the multi-sensory experience it is, at best, hard to touch on the subject of multi-sensory marketing without an understanding of the cognitive psychological influence behind it. (Krishna and Schwarz, 2013). In order to process information, three main components of memory need to come into play: sensory memory, working memory and long-term memory. This theory of making sense of the world around us is known as the Information Processing Model. (Schraw and McCrudden, 2013). Although this model is still valid, Krishna states that in this process, “neglected phenomena that were not easily conceptualized within a computer metaphor, including the role of moods, emotions, and other subjective experiences as well as the role of motivation” may be overlooked. Because of these observations and the emergence of other compelling data, we are aware as advertising researchers that we are about to enter an era in which sense-based marketing may contribute or perhaps determine the marketing strategy of many consumer lifestyle brands (Harvard Business Review, 2015).

Due to the interrelated nature that exists between mental activity and the sensory experience we can determine that multi-sensory stimulus affects us on a deep cognitive level. One of the most influential senses is auditory; thus, music is an especially powerful stimulus for affecting moods (Burner, 1990). Burner states, “appropriately structured music acts on the nervous system like a key on a lock, activating brain processes with corresponding emotional reactions. Music is not simply a generic sonic mass, but rather a complex chemistry of controllable elements.” For this reason music festivals provide a seamless platform for brands to leverage experiential marketing objectives.

Research Objective

In this paper I will discuss multi-sensory marketing on music festival social media platforms and how brands are applying it and it's residual effects on consumers perception of a brand at music festivals in the United States. Specifically, I will examine Indio, California's Coachella Music and Arts Festival and Austin, Texas' South by Southwest (SXSW) to analyze why and how brands can utilize sense-based experiences in their marketing mix. This review will assess multi-sensory marketing as a system in which those involved in promoting the product or service work to create sensory experiences. Thus, those exposed react to a brand through increased awareness, engagement, purchase intention and ultimately consumption due to the involvement of the five human senses (Hultén, 2011). Also, a further review will examine how brands succeed in provoking emotional connections with consumers at live music events.

The following paper will seek to prove that Multi-Sensory Marketing is an effective tool to increase affinity for a brand. While a number of specific sensory marketing tactics may be employed to achieve campaign objectives, music festivals, as a medium for execution, are particularly effective due to attendees' predisposition to be open to new experiences, a state of mind created by the emotional connection consumers feel towards music. The focus and context of this research relates to event sponsoring brands. Next is a literature review and theoretical background.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The notion of *Multi-sensory Marketing* has existed since the inception of advertisements on television. The advertisers' purpose was to stimulate the audience both visually and phonically with the intention of persuading viewers to favor their brand over another. In the 1940's mass-marketing techniques did not take into account the emotional linkage between a brand and its consumers (Hultén *et al.*, 2009). However, as a result of the Internet revolution of the early 90's, a more personalized approach to advertising surfaced. Early forms of advertising on the Internet were Search and Display ads, where consumers were targeted depending on their searches; display ads, in particular, would feature web banners that included text, audio, videos, logos and interactive media that were alluring in sight and sound (Garner, 2015). More personal forms of advertising surfaced online through the use of mobile phones (Garner, 2015), by location-tracking technologies such as the Global Positioning System (GPS) and Galileo Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) in order to pinpoint users' real-time locations and deliver location-specific ads on their mobile devices (Lee *et al.*, 2015). According to Garner (2015), these types of ads reflect consumers "on-the go needs and quick decisions." Ads delivered via mobile through location based technology tend to be highly individualized, with instant, personalized, and location-aware characteristics that cater to the specific needs of each ad recipient (Lee *et al.*, 2015). However, according to Lee (2015) "Consumers show negative reactions when exposed to products or services that are irrelevant to them, leading to avoidance of the ads and feelings of irritation meaning that in locational congruity and relevance between the ad and the recipient's personal interests

are critical for the success of mobile advertising.” When ads are properly tailored and accompanied by the use pleasant sounds and enticing visuals, companies’ are able to create relevant associations with their consumers and as a result build stronger brands.

Multi-Sensory Marketing

According to Krishna, *Sensory Marketing* is marketing that engages the consumers' senses and affects their perception, judgment, and behavior. Multi-sensory marketing differentiates itself from mass and relationship marketing because of the cognitive receptiveness the individual experiences with its origins being rooted in the five human senses (Hultén *et al.*, 2009). This is demonstrated below in Table 1.1 (Hultén, *et al.*, 2009)

TABLE 1.1 From mass and relationship to sensory marketing

	Mass marketing	Relationship marketing	Sensory marketing
Marketing	Goods logic	Service logic	Experience logic
	Exchange perspective	Relationship perspective	Brand perspective
	Transactional marketing	Relational marketing	Sensorial marketing
Strategic marketing	Product focus	Customer focus	Sense focus
	Customer acquisition	Customer retention	Customer treatment
	Transactional strategies	Relational strategies	Sensorial strategies
Tactical marketing	Persuasion and promotion	Interaction and interplay	Dialogue and online interactivity
	One-way communication	Two-way communication	Multidimensional communication
	Production technology	Information technology	Digital technology

Source: Developed from B. Hultén, N. Broweus, and M. van Dijk, *Sinnesmarknadsföring* (Malmö: Liber AB, 2008).

As Table 1 shows, sensory marketing is a crucial component of both mass marketing and relationship marketing. The effectiveness of Multi-sensory Marketing comes from the fact that individuals experience the world through their senses and that sensory information and the accompanying subjective experiences play a key role in human action and cognition. This occurs even in domains that seem abstract and far removed from immediate sensory inputs (Krishna and Schwarz, 2013). The creation of subconscious triggers, like the perception that a brand can embody sophistication, quality, elegance, innovativeness, modernity, interactivity, etc. are accomplished by the implementation of sense-based tactics; for example, imagery, touch and sounds. Thus, according to Krishna and Schwarz, creating a brand personality can also, “affect the perceived quality of an abstract attribute like its color, taste, smell or shape.”

An example is how retail store Abercrombie & Fitch uses several sense triggers to create a compelling in-store experience. To accomplish this they incorporate upbeat music and a signature scent at their stores, but most of all, the retailer is known for capitalizing on strong visuals. Dim lighting creates a club-like vibe, evoking feelings of exclusivity; their sales staff dresses in A&F clothing, which expresses their brand identity; and a moose head mounted on the wall brings to mind the company’s logotype. The overall design is meant to help consumers perceive Abercrombie & Fitch as the ideal lifestyle brand.

The Five Senses

The Abercrombie & Fitch example suggests that while individual sense triggers (e.g., auditory) can be effective, the use of a comprehensive, multi-sensory communication approach, can better assist a brand with providing consumers, memorable, entertaining and overall positive experience capable of swaying sentiment towards that brand (Weidmann *et al.*, 2013). While consumers will now review each sensory approach individually, the author here asserts that effectively integrating all perception elements including visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory and gustatory (Weidmann *et al.*, 2013) in event marketing environments, but most specifically at music festivals, makes the most meaningful and lasting branding impact on those in attendance.

Auditory

The sense of sound is one of the most influential at subliminally enhancing or diminishing positive attitude leading to affective behavioral responses in consumers. (Burner, 1990) It's surprisingly overwhelming to consider the pivotal role sound, and more specifically music, plays in our lives. The way a certain song brings you back to the joys of your childhood, perhaps singing at the top of your lungs with your family on a road trip, or a song from your first kiss which may seem to be permanently tattooed on your soul, or a "pick-me -up" tune blasting from your headphones before the big game – are all strong evocative memories. It is precisely for this reason that music festivals provide such a compelling platform for brands to influence consumers. Specifically, festival attendees' state of mind is arguably more open to imprinting during attendance providing an opportune

moment for branding activities to “move the needle” with consumers. In a study conducted by presenting sample consumers advertisements with and without music with the objective of determining the difference in emotional response, attitude towards a target brand, and purchase intent, results indicated that, “Music may not always significantly change pleasure, arousal, dominance, brand attitude, or purchase intent in an emotional advertising condition, but it can change how the viewer feels when watching the advertisement.” (Alpert and Alpert, 1991)

Additionally, the notion of central and peripheral processing suggests that cues such as music can lead to a positive attitude about the advertisement and then transfer that positive attitude to the brand (Alpert and Alpert, 1991). Since commercials are generally viewed as having an audience of potentially uninvolved, non-decision making consumers, the affective, stimulating aspects of music can be a persuasive tool and may help persuade viewers. Consequently, while music likely amplifies mood and emotional state, the use of music as a sensory marketing tool is greatly enhanced by combining it with additional triggers such as haptic, gustatory, visual or olfactory senses.

Visual

Among the human senses sight is the most prominent, most seductive and most powerful. (Hultén *et al.*, 2009) Through our eyes we perceive words and images and once processed we compare them with earlier experiences or memories so that every new word or image has a relation to previous sensory experience. (Hultén *et al.*, 2009) A brand must have a strong visual identity to be noticed. These visuals include product design,

packaging, logotype, website layout, store exterior and interior; collectively they reflect a holistic branding experience. (Hultén *et al.*, 2009) The color choice of a brand is imperative since different colors have different physiological effects. For instance, the color red attracts the eye the fastest so many brands use it in logotypes and advertisements.

Olfactory

A brand may also employ olfactory-based tactics to create the association of a specific aroma or aromas with the values a brand attempts to personify (Knowledge at Wharton, 2007). Olfactory's origin is based in Neuro-marketing and subliminal advertising stemming from the notion that various sensory stimuli have a positive effect on the brain (Knowledge at Wharton, 2007). A 1999 study by Rockefeller University revealed that stimuli, like aroma, have been proven to have a 35% recall, compared to only 5% of sight, 2% of what people hear, and 1% of touch (Knowledge at Wharton, 2007). Therefore what's important to note is that scent at a retail store, hotel or on-site event (like a music festival or branded party) is effective since according to Knowledge at Wharton, "You associate the aroma with the moment when you acquire a product or service..." Consequently, if olfactory elements are present at an event, consumers are more likely to recall the product/service interactions and experiences they encountered with a brand.

Haptic

The sense of touch allows humans to perceive three-dimensional objects by only thinking about or seeing them since the sense of touch, like sight, allows us to retrieve stored experiences in the brain. (Hultén *et al.*, 2009) Parts of the body that are rich in receptors like the hands and mouth account for most of the space in the brain, meaning the hands can be seen as the brain's link to the outside world. Touch, as a sensory marketing tool, can be particularly powerful since during a pleasant touching experience, the hormone oxytocin is secreted leading to calmness, relaxation and trust. (Hultén *et al.*, 2009) For brands, this means the texture of a product can be a sense trigger including factors such weight, dimension, shape, temperature, material, and surface texture. Many opportunities exist at music festivals to differentiate through the sense of touch and feel including the blast of cold air in a tent activation during a blazing hot summer day, free massages provided after standing all day, the way a RFID band feels on your wrist as you scan it at the entrance, or receiving a complimentary cold beverage in a branded cup, these all contribute to the overall festival experience and a consumer's recall of a positive brand experience.

Gustatory

The sense of taste is considered an individual's supreme sensory experience because it involves olfactory and haptic responses (if we are not able to smell food, the perceived taste is reduced by 80 percent). (Hultén *et al.*, 2009) For marketers, the taste experience is becoming more powerful, evoking feelings of nostalgia, interest,

and curiosity. Nostalgia, a yearning for yesterday (Vignolles and Pichon, 2014) or the desire for a feeling from the past, can create a familiar sense of belonging resulting in consumers associating a certain food product with a particular brand. Firms that successfully associate a specific taste with a brand leverage one of the most powerful senses thereby adding dimension to the brand and presenting a holistic view of a brand. (Hultén *et al.*, 2009) Hultén (2009) demonstrates this in an example of how IKEA, the popular furniture retail giant, offers food items like hot dogs, cinnamon rolls and other fast food items symbolizing the company's concept of low price, simplicity and accessibility. At a music festival, the taste sense can be leveraged to build on peoples' nostalgic feelings by providing unique food items that provide energy, which in turn, results in a more positive response to the event.

Effectiveness and Sensory Marketing

Effective sensory marketing requires an understanding of sensation and perception as it applies to consumer behavior (Krishna and Schwarz, 2013). Perhaps the most impactful aspect of using this marketing strategy is that its influences are subtle, in that consumers do not perceive them as marketing messages and therefore don't react with resistance as they would to usual advertisements and promotions (Harvard Business Review, 2015). Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the environment in which the service encounter takes place is significant in creating emotional connections. This comprises both the physical and relational characteristics

of a setting in which a service is rendered or consumed, as well as the elements in which the customer experiences a product or brand (Hultén, 2011). Lastly, stimuli that are generated by physical contact with sights, sounds, textures, and smells of the environment can contribute to an individual's decision to purchase (Hultén *et al.*..., 2009 and Hultén, 2011). Consumers no longer buy products and services based solely on the core component or need but rather look for and respond to the experiential and emotional experiences associated with the purchase (Hultén *et al.*, 2009). This importance of the experience is why the many brands that take their products or services and house them in experiential settings, like music festivals, enjoy an increased level of engagement, loyalty and purchase.

Music festivals are both part of the consumer lifestyle in the flesh and online (namely via social media channels). Examples of online consumer behavior related to events include, blogging, taking selfies, social networking to find friends and overall generate online and social media content. Music plays a critical role in our lives. Consumers often view music as a large part of their identity exemplified by the way an individual often associates specific songs and musical performers with their youth evoking powerful memories. If brands are well integrated into live music events and festivals, it can prove to be a great launching pad for new products by tying a personal, moving musical experience with the affinity for a specific branded product or service (Mashable, 2015).

Music Festival as Events

Event marketing has an actionable component of music festivals, which range from corporate to independent. Music festivals began as more independent. From the grassy lawns at Woodstock in the 1960's to the burning desert of modern day Coachella, music festivals have captured the hearts of music lovers and therefore the wallets of marketers. While the “product” of music festivals originally focused on introducing (and to some extent selling) new musicians to consumers, festivals today have evolved to become iconic products unto themselves (Wood and Masterman 2007). We will now review two of the most “talked about” music festivals, Coachella and South by Southwest, which have become differentiated from other festivals through the enormous amount of online social chatter related to these events as measured by buzz generated relative to total attendance (Eventbrite 2014) and event sponsors and brands (Close *et al.*, 2009).

The specific event context of interest to examine the theoretical domains in flow and sensory processing is a music festival--The Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. This annual event attracts more than 500,000 attendees during two-weekends every April and takes place in the heart of Indio, California. With the average attendee being between the ages of 18-34 years old, Millennials are willing to pay upwards of \$300 per pass. This means that Coachella is the perfect platform to achieve quality and quantity engagement with attendees. According to an article on Mashable.com, “Millennials make up 25% of the U.S population (77 million people), and their economic

spending power is \$1.3 trillion dollars.” The article also mentions that in order to sell this demographic a “product, concept or service, marketers have to connect with them on an emotional level that aligns with their complex value sets, surrounding socioeconomic conditions and new cultural norms.” Therefore one of the most helpful tools to connect brands with this demographic has been music (Mashable, 2015). Furthermore, a study conducted by Momentum Worldwide stated that, “Attending a branded live experience drives on average 65% of people to recommend that brand, versus the 63% who will make a recommendation based on referrals from their own friends, and 59% who will make a recommendation based on a trusted source (like a product authority or publication).” Although there are different methods of establishing brand affinity the most effective is when brands are experienced on a personal level through engagement. Ultimately concluding that sensory marketing can contribute to an individual’s final purchase when the five human senses are provoked and become a sensory experience (Hultén *et al.*, 2009).

South by Southwest has become an increasingly popular festival. With categories in music, film and interactive the festival attracts more than 75,000 attendees to Austin, Texas each March. A great example of the use of multi-sensory marketing was in 2014 when Oreo partnered with Twitter to create the Trending/Vending Machine (Co.Create, 2014). The partnership was sparked after Oreo’s “you can still dunk in the dark” tweet during the 2013 Super Bowl power outage (Lavecchia, 2013). The quick response by the brand generated immediate social media recognition from consumers, marketers and SXSW panels alike, pushing for content that is much more in real time, native and that

taps into the moment (Lavecchia, 2013). Moving forward with the concept of real-time, Oreo allowed consumers to create their own cookie combination based on what was currently trending on Twitter (Co.Create, 2014). The brand did this in order to deliver new engagement experiences around their products. People waited in line to use the Trending/Vending Machine for two hours, a clear indication that consumers were excited to participate in Oreo's sensory experience. Meanwhile the brand was able to gain insight as to what the company's future might look like: customizable experiences for consumers (Co.Create, 2014). Sensory Marketing can contribute to an individual's final purchase where the five human senses interact and become the sensory experience of that brand (Hultén *et al.*, 2009).

Implications for Consumer-Based Marketing Strategy

In order for brands to garner online chatter they need to create memorable experiences at on-site events. Hultén mentions in his book, *Sensory Marketing* that digital media has contributed to the importance to the field of sense-base marketing. He states, “More than anything, it offers individuals the possibility of satisfying their need for emotional as well as rational experiences on their own time and in their own space.” This can be interpreted in that people seek to express themselves on social media platforms by sharing their experiences at events, like music festival. Therefore through the use Multi-sensory Marketing brands can genuinely engage with consumers resulting in creating relevant relationships on social media. In a 2014 study on music festivals, researchers found that conversation about music festival actually happens before the event occurs. Anticipatory topics were mainly surrounded by announcements of a ticket purchases or excitement about the line up (Eventbrite, 2014). For brands this is important to recognize when conceptualizing social media objectives. Understanding of the use of social media before, during and after a music festival allows for strategic implementation of tools such as branded hashtags (Eventbrite, 2014). Event specific hashtags, during an event for instance, ensure that everyone that is having an online conversation regarding a particular brand is located on one space. Hashtags are able to provide insight to markets as to which artists or activations drive excitement resulting in a higher ROI for a brand.

Another way music festivals are reaching fans on social media is by live streams and videos during and after the festival. Approximately 5 million posts, in the duration of a year, came from people who were participating in music festivals remotely. Branded

content showcasing exclusive interviews and behind the scenes is a way brands are able to capitalize on this sort of platform. There is a heavy networking and social influence component of events and social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter). These social network apps and mobile-enabled online communities allow consumers to interact and build relationships. These relationships are both consumer-to-consumer (C2C) and business-to-consumer (B2C) or consumer-to-business (C2B). Most of this communication based relationship building is to leverage the event or sponsoring brand. Based on the findings here, when brands join the conversation they become integrated in the consumer's event experience.

Furthermore, an engaged event experience can help enhance outcomes for sponsors and events for brands (Close et al. 2009). By understanding what drives connections between a consumer and a brand, brands can use multi-sensory Marketing to build loyalty. Utilizing both the power of digital and experiential brands advertising at music festivals can deliver an overall sensory experience that's subtle and non-intrusive.

METHODS

Through qualitative research principally conducted by interviewing industry experts and quantitative analysis gathered through statistically significant primary surveys, the following paper asserts that music festivals provide fertile ground for brands to leverage sensory marketing techniques to build positive brand experiences in non-invasive, culturally meaningful ways.

Surveys

In order to gain further insight into the sensory experience at music festivals through a consumer's perspective, primary research was conducted in the form of online surveys. Online surveys were created using Qualtrics (See Appendix for sample survey) and distributed to via email, Mechanical Turk and Facebook. The objective was to capture quantitative data regarding the feelings and options of festivalgoers in Southern California and Austin, Texas; the two locations where the Coachella Music and Arts Festival and South by Southwest take place. A sample of 103 (one hundred and three) persons responded and the respondents' characteristics and results follow.

Sample Demographics

The highest percentages of participants were individuals 26 to 34 years of age, following by a group of 18 to 25 year olds. From all participants, 82% had attended at least one music festival. Research found that out of the 82 percentile, more males attend music festivals (55%) but not by much since female attendance rate was only by 10 percent less

(45%). Income level of individuals attending music festivals ranged from \$30,000-\$49,000 annually.

Sample Psychographics

When participants were asked to rank how dominant music is in their lives (Number 1 being Not at all dominant and 10 being Extremely dominant) the majority (26%) indicated that music was “extremely dominant”. Music is the main driver when it comes to what festival goes value in comparison to other attractions like attending to hang out with friends, parties and activities at the music festival, while sixty nine percent said they go for the “live music”. Social media plays a significant role in the lives of those who attend festivals since most (62%) people said they find out about music festivals from social media sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Among the three Facebook is mostly used (52%) to find news then Instagram at 41% and finally Twitter at 7%. The other popular way of finding out about music festivals is word of mouth (34%). Consumers who attend festivals enjoy being visually stimulated. When asked which of the five senses they would enhance if given the opportunity the “sense of sight” was chosen (61%).

Please refer to photo 2.1. When shown the photo 2.1, respondents indicated that this made them want to be at a music festival. Males responses to the question correlated closely with a tie of 21% indicating the photo made them excited or indifferent and a tie of 29% saying the image made them want to be at the festival or evoked feeling of missing out. For women reactions to the photo varied. The highest (53%) indicated the

image made them want to be at the festival, 28% of women said it made them feel indifferent, 12% said they felt as if they were missing out and 7% felt excited

2.1



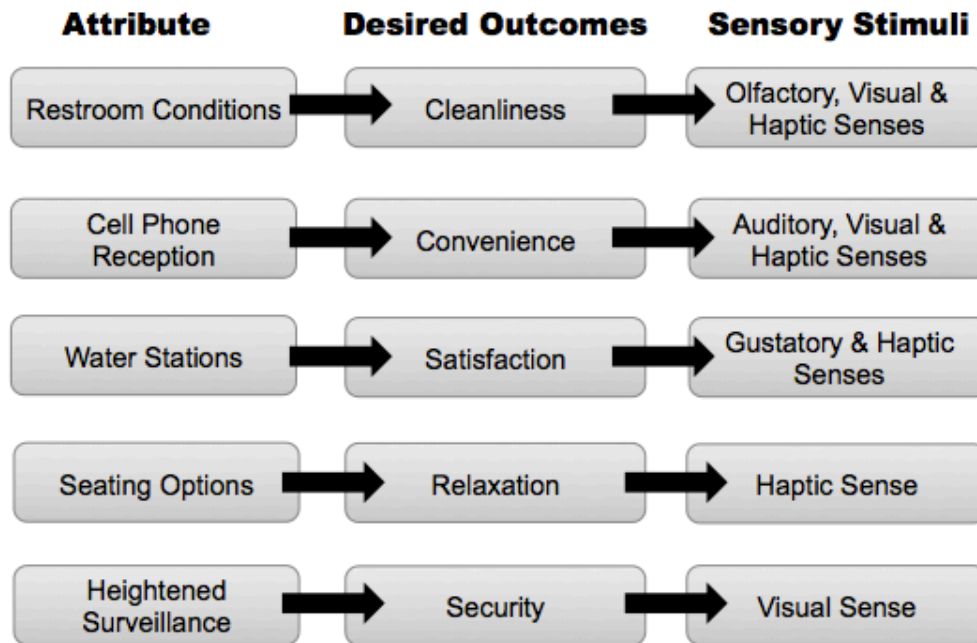
The key take away of this observation is that, people are driven by the overall experience of attending a festival and not exactly stand-alone elements like fear of missing out, the feeling of excitement or hanging out with friends. Primary research also indicated that festivalgoers are conformable with improvements in technology at festivals. Participants found it convenient (50%) as opposed to annoying (12%) if coupons were sent to their mobile phone when is close proximity to a store. This means that while at festivals brands

can alert attendees of their activation; for example, access to drink specials at the beer garden and it would be received positively. Overall convenience is a top priority amongst participants in the study. This is further supported when participants choose both better cell phone reception and integration of identification in the RFID wristband (56%) as methods to improve technology at music festivals.

Sensory Insights

Questions were also asked to probe respondents for preferences on sense-based stimuli at music festivals. Studies showed that although attendees would like improvements in certain attributes of festivals, they still enjoy the authenticity and the raw nature of the event. For example when asked what was preferred, sitting on the grass rather than sitting on a chair (when viewing a concert), sixty one percent of our respondents reported that they would rather sit on the grass. Festivalgoers were asked to list examples of what types of elements would make them feel more comfortable at a music festival. Chart 2.2 reflects the respondents' top five concerns, in order from most mentioned to least. The chart demonstrates the desired outcome of the attribute and how it attributes to sensory experience (refer to Chart 2.2)

Chart 2.2



Social Media Insights

Since the sensory experience is not only experienced at the festival itself but also transmitted onto various social media channels, gathering insight about how respondents are using social media was also included in the online survey. From the questions asked, we understand that seventy one percent of respondents are finding out about new festivals and brands that are involved in festivals through social media rather than the twenty five percent that heard about music festivals through friends. The number one social media platform preferred by festivalgoers is Facebook (54%), followed by Instagram (43%).

Interestingly, sixty one percent of respondents said they would find it convenient if they were passing by a shopping center and a coupon alert appeared on their mobile phone for a store near by, followed by twenty one percent that said they would ignore it.

In-depth Interviews

Qualitative research was done through in-depth interviews with industry professionals in order to understand Multi-sensory Marketing at a holistic level. Insight was gathered from a brands perspective from industry professionals.

According to the Chief Marketing Officer at Sound United, creators of Polk Audio, Definitive Technology and Boom Speakers, both scent and sound are proven triggers of memory. He agrees that Sensory Marketing is an important tool for marketers to leverage and drive brand linkage/recall. He said, “Pneumonic devices are extremely effective but seem to have fallen out of favor recently. I think it is amazing that brand’s get bored with a winning idea.” In other words music, whether it be live or in a commercial, is still one of the most influential stimuli to creating an emotional relationship with a brand, therefore by promoting a brand at a music festival a company can create subliminal associations in the mind of a consumer that are piggy backed by the festival experience. In his opinion a brand can see a return on investment by sponsoring an activation at a festival in the valuable context of , “1. Engagement (number of people who would experience my product first hand). 2. Emails/contact info from consumers (number of people we can re-target post event). 3. Social media—I want to be talked

about/part of the overall scene, how do you get consumers to talk about your brand for you.”

An organization that has been using Multi-Sensory Marketing techniques in the promotion of their products is Diageo Manufactures. A Director of PR in Entertainment and Influencer Marketing at the company commented on how sampling is the most obvious way to showcase a product. This appeals to consumers’ gustatory senses. A barrier to entry in the scotch category for example is that it’s confusing; he provides an example on how to overcome this barrier using Multi-Sensory tactics. He states, “There are so many choices, different ages, so vast different tastes, etc. In that case, “mentorship” (teaching consumers in a fun, non-preachy way where you’re also allowing exploration) is very effective.” Diageo accomplishes this through a mentorship style event held yearly that takes places in cities like New York, Miami, Los Angeles and Austin called House of Walker. There, consumers physically engage in a Johnnie Walker tasting hosted by a brand ambassador. In this years’ event, consumers could place their glass on a table that was also an LCD screen with a personalized welcome greeting. The screen was so visually stimulating according to the director he said, “it comes to life” since when the tasting began images were timed to coincide with the Ambassador’s dialogue. Consumers could then share directly to their social channels via the “Table.” In sum, this engagement and sensory event experience relates to consumer behavior at events and online consumer behavior regarding events and their sponsors.

DISCUSSION

Sensory marketing, combined with more traditional tactics, is a powerful strategy for building brand awareness, engagement and purchase intent supported by both primary and secondary research. Specifically, as a consumer proceeds through the purchase funnel typically evaluating the technical features of a product, sensory marketing provides the brand marketer an additional tool often capable of evoking a consumer reaction that, if done well, is capable of creating a much stronger emotional tie to a brand. More simply stated, while technical feature-based marketing may satisfy a consumer's need to assess whether to buy a product by being "rational", multi-sensory marketing has the benefit of engaging a consumer more holistically or emotionally. While there are many potential venues to employ sensory marketing techniques, music festivals provide a compelling platform given festival growth, attendee demographics, and the charged atmosphere. More specifically, the number and size of festivals has increased markedly over the last decade attracting record crowds. Additionally, festivals are quickly becoming one of Americans' and particularly Millennials', favorite pastimes allowing concentrated access to a highly valued coveted consumer segment. Given this generations' connection to online conversations through social networks, the reach and relevance of musical festivals extends well beyond the festival venue providing the marketer a valuable brand communication tool. It is also likely that the importance of musical festivals will only continue to grow in future years suggesting marketers everywhere should seriously consider including branded strategies, leveraging sensory techniques, at these events. (Eventbrite, 2014) To do so effectively, marketers should be

careful to implement a multi-sensory event experience by stimulating several, if not all, of the five human senses in an attempt to link the positive feelings created by the festival atmosphere to the brand's products or services.

Future Research

We are at the forefront of the music festival explosion and marketers are just starting to leverage the opportunity to build brand affinity through multi-sensory marketing at these events. Innovation in the types and locations of music festivals is only beginning with event organizers branching out into new approaches such as the recent announcement of an electronic only music festival held on a cruise ship (HARD's Holy Ship) providing a captive millennial audience. Consequently, additional research is necessary to understand the financial return on marketing investments into branded, sensory interactions at festivals. More specifically, a comprehensive, longitudinal study examining how sensory marketing at festivals correlates to consumer recall or actual purchases could provide brands and marketers the research required to further support this marketing approach.

APPENDIX



How dominant is music in your life?

Not at all dominant

Extremely dominant

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

Have you ever attended a music festival?

Yes

No

If so, indicate below which ones.

What characteristic of music festivals do you like?

Hanging out with friends at the festival

The live music

The activities other than music

The parties around the festival



How does the image above make you feel?

Excited

You're missing out

You want to be at a festival

Indifferent

In the space below, provide examples of what types of things would make you more comfortable at a music festival.

While watching live music, would you rather...

Sit on the grass

Sit on a chair

What improvements in technology would you like to see at music festivals?

Better cell phone reception

ID integrated in wristband

Both

Would you rather...

Look clean

Smell clean

Feel clean

What social media platform do you use the most?

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

Do you follow Coachella, South by Southwest or any other music festivals on social media, if so which ones and on what platform?

How do you find out about live music events?

From other people

Phone apps

Social media

In the space below indicate which mobile apps you use the most?

You're passing by a shopping center and receive a coupon alert on your mobile for a store near by, you...

Find it annoying

Find it convenient

Ignore it

Use the coupon

If you could enhance one of your five senses, which would it be?

Sense of touch

Sense of smell

Sense of taste

Sense of sight

Sense of sound

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